192 in the Proto-Nordic or Proto-Germanic shape; for instance the word kuningas in Finnish today retains exactly the form of the English word king several hundred years ago.

194 The most prominent phonological feature in present-day Finnish is the extensive use of vowels. Finnish is the only language in Europe which uses proportionally more vowels than consonants, 96 consonants for each 100 vowels. Italian, e. g. uses 108 consonants for each 100 vowels. Another characteristic feature is the vowel harmony, i. e. the back vowels a, o, u do not occur in the same word with the corresponding front vowels ä, ö, y. Dipthongs are abundant. The consonant system is simple, but the stops p, t, k and their compounds are subject to so-called consonant gradation, depending on the quality of the following syllable. Except

●/94 for recent loan-words a word or a syllable in standard Finnish cannot begin with more than one consonant, and neither can any consonant clusters occur in word-final position. Length is phonemic in Finnish, and since length and stress do not coincide, but a short syllable may be stressed and a long unstressed, this phenomenon requires special attention by the foreign speaker. He must be careful to place the stress always on the first syllable and keep the long vowels long, even when they are not stressed. Mispronunciations may lead to comical and even annoying situations. In the orthography of Finnish, which is one of the most adequate in the world, a long sound is marked with a double letter. Tapaa minut! 'Meet me!' is something entirely different from Tapa minut! 'Kill me!'

1:Indiana U S-4, 5(no date)1955 EO1 Finland EO1

Finnish is usually considered a difficult
191 language to learn, but after the preliminary
194
difficulties are overcome, it appears to be quite regular in its construction. To a speaker of a Germanic language like English, Finnish may at first sound odd but quite pleasing. Its abundant, fully articulated vowels and the absence of harsh gutteral sounds lend to it a musical, sonorous quality which is strangly reminiscent of Italian.

197 Spoken Finnish is divided into several dialects which seem to be rather far apart but which are mutually understandable. Usually the dialects are divided into a smaller but rather heterogeneous western group and a larger, more or less homgeneous eastern group, which changes into Kerlian without any sharp demarcation line at the eastern boundary. Actually, the reasons why Karelian is considered a different